



AmeriCorps State Formula
Technical Assistance –
AmeriCorps 101

March 2, 2011@ 2pm MST
Conference Call (641) 715-3620
Conference # 937749

I. Welcome

Rebecca Steele

- a. Introduction of staff
 - i. Tony Dean – Financial Manager
 - ii. Rebecca Steele – Grants Manager
 - iii. Jim Auer – Grants Coordinator
- b. Attendance
 - i. Ken Soderberg – MT FWP
 - ii. Tracy McIntyre – Eureka Rural Development Partners
 - iii. Jeanie Saarinen – Montana Credit Unions for Community Development
 - iv. Karen Smith – Montana Credit Unions for Community Development
 - v. April Keippel – St. Vincent's Healthcare
 - vi. Heather Fink – St. Vincent's Healthcare
 - vii. Jennifer Lane – OCS
 - viii. Jennifer Lawson – OCS
 - ix. Kelsey Bauer – OCS
 - x. Jan Lombardi – OCS
- c. Explanation of call
 - i. This call is intended to give potential grant applicants the opportunity to learn about the history of national service and its structure; the Montana Commission on Community Service; organizational requirements to manage an AmeriCorps program; how AmeriCorps benefits organizations; AmeriCorps programs; sources of AmeriCorps funding; state and national funding priorities; and additional sources of information on National Service
- d. Questions?
 - i. April – Has the funding amount been determined?
 - 1. Tony – Not at this point, we are waiting to hear funding levels from the federal level.
 - ii. April – What information needs to be included in the MOU?
 - 1. Rebecca – MOU's should include an agreement from the Organization to support the program financially through in kind or cash donations.

II. Terms and Acronyms

Tony Dean

- a. AC – AmeriCorps

- b. CNS/CNCS, the Corporation – the Corporation for National and Community Service
- c. OCS – Office of Community Service: Acronym not listed in handout but refers to our office
- d. CFR – Code of Federal Regulation: AmeriCorps is listed under 45 CFR
- e. DUNS – Data Universal Numbering System: Numeric number specific to an organization for identification purposes
- f. FFR – Federal Financial Report
- g. PER – Periodic Expense Report
- h. FTE – Full-Time Equivalent: Method to calculate the number of staff employed in an organization. Example, 5 full time employees would equal 5.0 FTE, however 5 half-time employees would only equal 2.5 FTE)
- i. MSY – Member Service Year: Term used in AmeriCorps to determine the number of AmeriCorps members. It is similar to FTE and is used frequently in the application materials. When submitting your letter of intent one question refers to the # of members you are requesting so this is something that you will want to start thinking about)
- j. IDC – Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate: Term used in the budget section of the application and provides for additional funding resources)
- k. NOFA – Notice of Funds Available
- l. NOFO – Notice of Funds Opportunity
- m. NCCC – National Civilian Conservation Corps
- n. OIG – Office of the Inspector General: Office under the federal authority that conducts and overseas audits of AmeriCorps programs.
- o. OMB – Office of Management and Budget: Part of the Presidents executive branch that overseas government spending. Term is often used when referring to rule/regulations that are created by the office.
- p. RFP – Request for Proposal
- q. RSVP – Retired Senior Volunteer Program
- r. VISTA – Volunteers in Service to America
- s. EAP – Education Award Only Program: AmeriCorps members who successfully complete their service are eligible for an education award that can be used to pay off student loans or for future school. An EAP program means that the member can receive an education award but will not receive a stipend during his/her service)

III. Questions?

- a. Please note any answers given are not final until posted online in the meeting minutes.

IV. What is AmeriCorps

Jim Auer

- a. A Federally Funded National Service Program where members gain job skills, earn money for college, and learn the importance of giving back to their communities

- b. Through grants and the dedication of members, the Corporation for National and Community Service and AmeriCorps strengthen communities by mobilizing community resources

V. The Corporation for National and Community Service

Jim Auer

a. History of National Service

- i. **1933** Civilian Conservation Corps formed
- ii. **1944** GI Bill links service and education
- iii. **1961** Peace Corps is formed
- iv. **1964** President Johnson declares war on poverty
- v. **1965** Foster Grandparents begins, Older Americans Act is passed
- vi. **1971** Retired Senior Volunteer Program is Launched
- vii. **1978** The Young Adult Conservation Corps is created
- viii. **1985** Campus Compact is formed
- ix. **1990** President Bush signs the National and Community Service Act authorizing schools to support service learning
- x. **1993** Montana Community Service Act passed
 - 1. President Clinton Signs the National and Community Service Trust Act creating AmeriCorps and CNCS
- xi. **2003** President Bush Creates USA Freedom Corps
- xii. **2009** President Obama signs the Edward Kennedy Serve America Act

VI. The Montana Commission on Community Service

Rebecca Steele

a. The Montana Commission on Community Service was created in **1993** by the Montana Community Service Act to

- i. Assist in the development and coordination of state community service programs, integration of services, dissemination of information, development of materials, and evaluation of and accountability for the services provided
- ii. Commissioners appointed by the Governor

b. The Governor's Office of Community Service was created in **1993** by the Montana Community Service Act

- i. Executive Director appointed by the Governor
- ii. Renew the ethic of civic responsibility in the state;
- iii. encourage the citizens of the state, regardless of age or income, to engage in full-time or part-time service to the state;
- iv. call young people to serve in projects that will benefit the state and improve their life chances through the acquisition of literacy, job skills, and interpersonal skills;
- v. build on the existing organizational framework of state and local governmental entities to expand full-time and part-time service opportunities in a wide variety of programs for all citizens, particularly youth and older Montanans;
- vi. involve participants in activities that would not otherwise be performed by employed workers;

- vii. establish programs to accomplish labor-intensive improvements to public or low-income properties or to provide services for the benefit of the state, its communities, and its people through service contracts that specify the work to be performed.

VII. Organizational requirements for AmeriCorps

Tony Dean

- a. Who can apply
 - i. Public or private nonprofit organizations, community and faith-based organizations, state and local education institutions, Indian Tribes, state agencies, cities, counties, and local governments
 - 1. Note: private organizations are not eligible to apply
- b. Capacity to manage an AmeriCorps program
 - i. Staff capacity to manage members
 - ii. HR capacity for recruiting, hiring, training, performing performance evaluation, and on-going member support
 - iii. Financial management
 - 1. Accounting systems in place to manage a federal grant, experience working with grants, and the ability to meet matching requirements
 - 2. Matching Requirements- The TA call will discuss this in more detail but in general applications are expected to match at a rate of 24% during the first three years then it increases every year to 50% by year 10 (one to one match).
- c. Prohibited AmeriCorps Activities*
 - i. AmeriCorps Members and any staff who are part of the AmeriCorps program may not, while charging time to a Corporation supported program:
 - 1. Influence legislation
 - 2. Organize or engage in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes
 - 3. Assist, promote or deter union organizing
 - 4. Impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining
 - 5. Engage in partisan political activities
 - 6. Participate in or endorse events or activities related to elections, legislation, or political parties
 - 7. Engage in religious instruction, conduct worship services, or construct a religious house of worship
 - 8. Conduct a voter registration drive
 - 9. Provide a benefit to a for-profit, political, or labor organization.

*For full list and explanation see 45CFR Part 2520.65

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>

- ii. AmeriCorps members should not be viewed as cheap labor
- iii. AmeriCorps members cannot replace (displacement) the duties of staff nor can they be treated as staff

VIII. Benefits of AmeriCorps

Jim Auer

- a. Avenue to engage volunteers for your organization in a mutually beneficial way
 - b. AmeriCorps members bring creativity and unique skills to projects
 - c. Members, through their network of AmeriCorps peers, can aid in making connections with other organizations
 - d. Allow organizations to take a part in developing tomorrow's non-profit leaders.
- IX. National Service Programs Rebecca Steele
- a. VISTA vs. AmeriCorps State vs. NCCC
 - i. AC State and National –
 - 1. State programs are overseen by OCS
 - 2. While National programs are overseen by CNCS
 - 3. Both, provide direct service in the community and fall within 6 focus areas (to be discussed in section X. Funding Priorities), members must be at least 17 years old, slot hours vary, living allowance are only required for full time members, and education awards are based on slot type
 - ii. VISTA –
 - 1. VISTA programs are overseen by the CNCS state office, provide capacity building for organizations, focus on issues related to poverty, members must be college graduates, and serve full time 1 year, all members receive a living allowance and education award
 - iii. NCCC –
 - iv. National Civilian Conservation Corps is overseen by CNCS out of one of 5 regional campuses, also provide direct service in the community, members may serve nationwide, five focus areas, members must be 18-24, serve full time for 1 year, all members receive a living allowance and education award
 - b. Senior Corps
 - i. Engages older Americans (55+) through RSVP, Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions – overseen by CNCS state office
 - c. Learn and serve
 - i. Engages individuals in service to their community while working toward their education – overseen by OCS and operated out of OPI
 - d. Current programs in Montana
 - i. MCC, Campus Corps, Energy Corps, Young Adult Service Corps, Justice for Montanans Project. In addition there are many national direct and VISTA programs operating in the state
- X. Sources of Funding for AmeriCorps State Programs Rebecca Steele
- a. Formula – Funds granted to state commissions and subgranted to AmeriCorps programs operating in that state. Applicants compete at the state level for formula funds. The state commission is responsible for oversight of grant funds
 - b. Competitive – Funds distributed by CNCS. If a program operates in a single state the state commission will be the grantee and the AmeriCorps program will be

the subgrantee, in this situation oversight is performed by the state commission. Applicants compete at the national level for competitive funds. For program operating in more than one state CNCS grants funds directly to the program and provides oversight.

XI. Funding Priorities

Tony Dean

- a. CNCS Focus Areas
 - i. Disaster Services, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, Economic Opportunity, Veterans and Military Families
- b. Montana State initiatives
 - i. The Governor's Strategic Initiative for Clean Energy
 - ii. The Governor and First Lady's Strategic Initiative for Math and Science Education
 - iii. Expand and Promote Volunteerism in Montana
- c. Expectations for Programs
 - i. Disability inclusion in the design and delivery of the program
 - ii. A collaborative approach to program planning, design and delivery
 - iii. Demonstrated ability to successfully administer an AmeriCorps or other federal grant
 - iv. Addressing rural, underserved, or areas of extreme poverty that are not currently served by AmeriCorps programs

XII. Available resources online

Jim Auer

- a. [AmeriCorps](http://www.americorps.gov/) (http://www.americorps.gov/)
- b. [Resource center](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/) (http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/)
 - i. [Startup guide](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/ac-startup) (http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/ac-startup)
- c. OMB Circulars
 - i. [State Local and Tribal Governments](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004/) (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a087_2004/)
 - ii. [Educational institutions](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a021_2004) (post-secondary) (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a021_2004)
 - iii. [Non-Profits](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a122_2004) (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars_a122_2004)
- d. [Megasearch](http://www.americorps.gov/help/ac_sn_all/2010_Megasearch_Site.html) (http://www.americorps.gov/help/ac_sn_all/2010_Megasearch_Site.html)
 - i. [Managing current grants and projects](http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/manage/index.asp) (http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/manage/index.asp)

XIII. Questions

- a. Jeanie – If a member does not need their education award can it be transferred?
 - i. Rebecca – If the member is 55+ then yes.
http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/serveamerica/edaward.asp#Transfer_Ed_Award

Contact:

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